

Constellation FURYK & FRIENDS presented by Circle K

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Palm Coast, Florida, USA

Hammock Beach Golf Resort & Spa

Ryan Palmer

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We are now joined by Ryan Palmer here at the Constellation Furyk & Friends. Turned 50 a couple of weeks ago; making your PGA Tour Champions debut. How great is it to be out here?

RYAN PALMER: Yeah, same way it's been forever, but it's only been a year since I -- well, I had full status a year ago, but spending the season playing some Tour events, Korn Ferry events, went on the DP World Tour five, six times, and now we're here.

No, it's exciting seeing all the guys I've known and played with early in my career. It's funny how everybody kept congratulating me and telling me welcome. No, it feels great to be out here and keep moving on.

Q. We're here at Hammock Beach Resort for the first time. You have a special connection to the Conservatory Course. Can you tell us what happened there in 2008?

RYAN PALMER: Yeah, what is it, almost 18 years, 19 years ago? To win in '08 at the Conservatory Course, I remember to this day coming down the stretch and burning the last hole to break a seven-man tie at the moment.

I saw a gentleman today that came up to me and was talking about it and remembering it from then. Yeah, Hammock Beach has a little special place in my heart.

Q. There are two things about that. I remember, one, I think it might have been -- that win might have come before the fewest fans in the history of the PGA Tour if I remember right. Everybody got chased off the course by a thunderstorm, and then y'all came back on, and they didn't let the people back in because it was just a logistic -- it was the volunteers and media.

RYAN PALMER: Yeah, it was start and stop all day Sunday, and just the wind played havoc. Rain, stop, go, stop. I remember my wife and son were there, and then my financial, business manager, his son came in town for



it. We finished in the dark. We didn't have a playoff coming.

Q. They ushered all the fans and all the spectators away because of thunderstorms, and then they said there's only so little time left, they said we can't.

RYAN PALMER: Yeah, it was different for sure, but it turned out for the --

Q. You have the check cashed.

RYAN PALMER: We were sitting there waiting and having one guy finish, and I was in the scoring table when a friend of mine came over and said he missed his putt and that I had won.

Q. I found an old picture just today of that birdie putt that you had on 18. I'm assuming you remember everything about it. Didn't exactly knock the bottom out -- knock the back out of it. Looked like it fell in the right side.

RYAN PALMER: It went in one side. I got a picture of it. Half the ball in the hole. That's the picture I've got. Pretty cool. I have it at home.

Q. Do you remember the putt? Is that something that sticks in your mind forever?

RYAN PALMER: It was about a 9-footer, and I had been doing a drill since the beginning of the year that had to do a 3, 6, and 9, and 12-foot putt, and this was about 9 to 10 feet.

I remember telling myself, this is the money putt you've hit on the practice green forever all year long. Got out there and it worked.

Q. So the good news is you got a lot less bunkers on this course than on Conservatory, but you still got a lot more sand and wind and rain happening. Thoughts on this ocean course?

RYAN PALMER: Yeah, somebody today said that was the longest course on the PGA Tour, The Conservatory back



then. No, playing the front nine today was -- there was plenty of bunkers, but fortunately I've still got a little length and not many came and played today, so that was nice.

It was fun. Just so soft. I mean, there's no ball rolling out anywhere and balls are plugging on the greens.

I haven't seen the back nine yet, so we'll play tomorrow on the pro-am as well. So far it's very wide fairways. It's your typical ocean course, it looks like. Resort type of course.

No, there are some good holes out there for sure and some character greens, some of them. It will be fun.

Q. I asked Bernhard -- he's been such a standard-bearer on this Tour -- what advice he might have to a rookie like you. In his best German accent and impression of a NASCAR driver, he said you have to put the peddle to the metal in the opening round because there's just not a lot of time to catch up on the Champions Tour. Can you speak to that adjustment that you may have to make?

RYAN PALMER: Not really. I mean, I played some Korn Ferry events, and the way the Tour has been playing the last few years, if you're not shooting 68 at worst, you're not going to survive. I've watched these tournaments enough this last six months, and you can tell the scores are low. You've got to shoot 15, 20 under par for three days to win out here as well.

Yeah, especially at a golf course like this with the softness, it's just peddle to the metal, flat at every pin, because the ball is going to run away and bounce. No, you've seen it.

And these guys are still good. They're so great at this game. You've got to be on your game to compete, for sure.

Q. When you see the expectation -- or not the expectations, but the seasons that Zach Johnson has had and Stewart Cink has had, and the fact that they were struggling near the end of their career with the young guys, they came on here and they found the fountain of youth. You may not see it that way, but do you put added expectation on yourself to come out of the box strong?

RYAN PALMER: Not really. I mean, especially with only two weeks to play prior to the playoff season, for me it's just coming out and just shoot some low rounds. Whether I make it to the St. Louis or not, I just want to get some good rounds in these two weeks and gear up for next year.

I mean, it's exciting knowing I'm coming in and with my

length a little bit out here it will help. It didn't help out there with the guys as far as hitting it on Tour in the Korn Ferry Tour. But no, it will help a little bit. A little shorter golf courses for sure.

But I know what I need to work on to compete with these guys. These guys are still so good. You see what Zach is doing, what Stewart is doing. Mainly my wedge game. That's the number one thing this fall and this winter I'll work on the most. Just dialing in my wedges to hit it a little closer and obviously putting. It's a putting contest every week.

Q. I was a starter announcer at the beginning of the Senior Tour, which now obviously is called the PGA Tour Champions, and we had a guy named Tom Shaw that played, and you may remember him. He was so youthful looking that literally some of the fellow competitors wanted his birth certificate to see. You are very youthful looking. You're one of the youngest Champion Tour players I've ever seen in person, up front live. What are you doing? Is it a cream? Is it working out? 50-year-olds now are, like, what 30-year-olds used to be 30 years ago.

RYAN PALMER: No, no trick. Been fortunate to be healthy, and it's the biggest thing. I've put work in the gym when I needed, but no special tricks. Blessed (laughing).

Q. Over the years guys who were about to turn 50 and come out here, not all of them kept a lot of playing status or full playing status like you did up until now basically. You didn't have to get creative. They'd have to get creative in ways to get competitively sharp again before they hit 50 because they just couldn't come out here and turn it on. I mean, do you gear your past year toward this at all, or were you just playing tournaments?

RYAN PALMER: No, I was thankful for my career to be able to play as long as I did up until this point. Last year I used my career money exemption last season. This season I was able to play 16 events. Not very good golf, but I was able to keep playing.

Yes, some guys have struggled over the past few years leading up to their 50s of playing. You know, losing their status. They spent two or three years choosing not to play Korn Ferry or just staying home and trying to practice. I've talked to a few guys who did that, and then they struggled their first year out here because they weren't ready.

So fortunately everything is ready. Whether I put it to good use and perform is one thing. No, I'm thankful that I was able to play a lot leading up until now. I was able to stay



sharp.

Q. Did you find yourself this year watching more of the senior golf on TV than you normally would have?

RYAN PALMER: Yeah, back home at the club I always talk about my peers are on TV, let's watch them. I watched a little bit more.

Q. More than you normally would?

RYAN PALMER: To see the scores. Zach being one of my dearest friends since day one, since '03, and seeing what he has did has been pretty remarkable. I've watched it a little more this year, for sure.

Q. As you see all of the changes that are taking place on the PGA Tour, is it a little bit weird to look back on your career and the four wins and realize three of those events don't exist anymore?

RYAN PALMER: There's a lot of events that are not existent anymore. We're losing American Express in Palm Springs next year. Sony Open is gone. It's a weird time, this game of golf, what it went through the last four, five years, what happened with LIV coming in and now the changes with the Championship Series and Challenger Series.

My overall opinion it never really was broken, in my opinion, how we played the game and going into Tour Championship every year and the playoffs. But times change.

Brian Rolapp is doing a great job at what he's doing as far as, you know, building the brand, building the equity side of the PGA Tour. It's going to be interesting to see how it all pans out in '28 with all the new series of -- you know, Championship Series, Challenger Series, the new Korn Ferry Tour.

It's hard to speculate, tell what's going to happen.

I got no doubt it will be a good place.

Q. A guy turns 50, transitions to this Tour. There's no cake or party or anything. If just kind of happens. I'm trying to figure out how you feel looking back on such a terrific career and your thoughts about the future, this newfound opportunity here?

RYAN PALMER: I am excited. I've said numerous times how proud I am of myself on my career, but the way I did it. I never chased contracts, never chased equipment deals, never chased changing swings because I watched

somebody else or anything like that.

I had a great coach in Neil Wilkins leading up to '08 and then Randy Smith since then. I always did it kind of -- always say I did it my way, and I how I prepared, how he played, how I played, I never changed things. You know, and the key was winning. I learned to win at an early age, age level, and that was the goal each year is to get better and try to win at each level, and I was able to do that leading up into my rookie season on Tour.

Yeah, very thankful and blessed I was able to stay healthy. And that was the key. You see a lot of guys today, it's hard staying healthy, and they miss a lot of time. I never had to deal with that.

Q. George brought in Bernhard Langer, NASCAR, everything. Looking, you're all logoed up like NASCAR, and you have a Pennzoil logo on your sleeve. NASCAR really -- the home of NASCAR just down the road here in Daytona. How did you get hooked up with Pennzoil?

RYAN PALMER: I don't know. I know a guy I grew up with works for Pennzoil down in Houston, so I guess that was -- they wanted to get into golf and do some entertaining with clients. My management, Chism Sports, has a few players wearing it. It's a pretty good deal. We've had some good events with them, and it's a good group to --

Q. Do you get free oil changes for a year?

RYAN PALMER: I haven't tried that yet. May look into it.

Q. What's your personal cart policy? Just ignore it for --

RYAN PALMER: I think we'll still use it. I'm learning what the policy is, what the rules are. I guess driving off the tee I have to, but I'll still try to walk as much as possible just to stay keep moving, keep the back loose.

There may be certain weeks, for instance, Sony Open coming up in Hawaii Shannon and I will probably walk that whole week. There's no reason to cart that week, and it's such a great -- playing it for 20 years on Tour and love every bit of that walk out there, so that will be one week we probably won't even mess with it.

Q. There are some long walks if I remember from here to green to tee.

RYAN PALMER: Here is a different -- they have shuttle this is week too. We'll use this week. Might as well. (Laughing).

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

